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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [AJ](#) [BO](#) [GG](#) [UP](#) [PL](#)
SUBJECT: POLAND: PRESIDENT'S SECURITY ADVISOR HIGHLIGHTS
EASTERN POLICY PRIORITIES

Classified By: DCM QUANRUD FOR REASON 1.4 (B), (D)

[¶1.](#) (C) SUMMARY. During a November 26 meeting with DCM, Wladyslaw Stasiak, the Head of the Polish President's National Security Bureau, highlighted the Presidential Administration's policy towards Poland's Eastern neighbors, emphasizing President Kaczynski's desire to revive Europe's waning interest in resolving Georgia's plight. Stasiak also urged further engagement with Ukraine on NATO membership, agreed the EU should be more judicious about any further easing of sanctions against Belarus, and expressed concern about Western support for Azerbaijan. END SUMMARY.

GEORGIA: KACZYNSKI SEEKS TO SHAKE UP EUROPEAN COMPLACENCY

[¶2.](#) (C) Stasiak described President Lech Kaczynski's controversial weekend trip to Georgia -- during which his convoy was either fired on or over -- as an effort to underline Europe's complacency regarding the plight of Georgia's sovereignty, particularly ahead of the NATO Foreign Ministers' meeting December 2-3. President Kaczynski sought to highlight that there cannot be "business as usual" as long as problems continue to fester in Georgia.

UKRAINE: KEEP THE NATO DOOR OPEN

[¶3.](#) (C) Stasiak emphasized that NATO should stay engaged with Ukraine regarding eventual membership, despite that country's political instability. If NATO's door remains open to Ukraine, it would help stabilize the political situation in Kyiv and thwart potential Russian claims of victory over NATO. During his October trip to Ukraine, Stasiak found a large portion of Ukrainians -- including the Prime Minister's cabinet -- favor integration with transatlantic institutions. NATO, however, faces a branding problem. Many Ukrainians, he said, still associate the word "NATO" with Communist-era propaganda labeling it as a hostile and aggressive military force.

BELARUS: TEST LUKASHENKA BEFORE REWARDING HIM

[¶4.](#) (C) In contrast to Polish Foreign Ministry officials, Stasiak believes the EU should maintain as much leverage as possible over Belarus until Lukashenka implements practical and durable democratic changes. It would be counterproductive for the EU to permanently lift the visa ban based on Lukashenka's dubious promises of reforms.

AZERBAIJAN: ALIYEV FEELS NEGLECTED BY THE WEST

[¶5.](#) (C) Stasiak indicated that he is increasingly focusing on Azerbaijan. During his trip to Baku 1-2 months ago, President Aliyev expressed concern that the United States and EU were "neglecting" Azerbaijan. We pointed out that Secretary Bodman's recent trip to Baku was a clear indicator of our commitment to the region.

[¶6.](#) (C) COMMENT. The meeting with Stasiak highlighted the

general agreement -- with some notable exceptions -- between the government and the president's administration on Eastern policy. Stasiak, for example, told us that he personally agreed with the underlying premise of the "Doctrine" that Foreign Minister Sikorski presented in Washington last week (i.e., any attempt by Russia to redraw the borders of Europe should entail a proportional response by the whole Atlantic community). The notable differences relate to Georgia and Belarus. The GoP insists on respecting the Sarkozy-Medvedev cease-fire commitments, but President Kaczynski has been even more forward-leaning, and has looked for opportunities to demonstrate solidarity with Georgian President Saakashvili. However, Kaczynski's recent trip to Georgia to shake up European complacency might have backfired. The Polish press has widely described it as an "escapade" that needlessly endangered the President, and some questioned Kaczynski's assumption that the Russian-speaking troops he overheard were Russians, and not South Ossetians. On the Belarusian front, Sikorski has aggressively taken the lead in attempting to ease EU sanctions against Minsk, which has generated significant criticism from Kaczynski's camp. END COMMENT.

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